

REMARKS

This response is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated June 5, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on September 5, 2006. In view of the following discussion, the Applicants believe that all claims are in allowable form.

CLAIM REJECTIONS**35 U.S.C. §102(b) Claim 23**

Claim 23 stands rejected as being anticipated by *Komino* (U.S. Patent No. 6,156,151). In response, the Applicants have amended claim 23 to more clearly recite certain aspects of the invention.

Claim 23, as amended, recites elements not taught or suggested by *Komino*. *Komino* teaches a lower baffle plate 118 which is constituted by part of the central casing part CC defining the processing chamber 101 (column 6, lines 26-27). A suspension ring 118b for surrounding the central portion of susceptor 114 in a close state is attached to the inner edge portion of the lower baffle plate 118. The lower baffle plate 118 in Figure 4 is also is also constituted by part of the central casing part CC, and is also attached to the suspension ring 118b. *Komino* does not teach or suggest a first predetermined gap between the substrate support pedestal and the restrictor plate, and a second predetermined gap between the restrictor plate and the sidewalls of the processing chamber. In contrast to the claimed invention, *Komino* discloses that baffle plate 118 is part of the chamber wall and also, by suspension ring 118b, seals with the susceptor. Thus, the baffle plate of *Komino* can not be in a space-apart relation with the wall that it integrally extends therefrom or the susceptor it is sealed thereto. Therefore, *Komino* does not teach or suggest a restrictor plate in a laterally space-apart relation relative to the sidewalls of a processing chamber wherein a first predetermined gap is between the substrate support pedestal and the restrictor plate, and a second predetermined gap is between the restrictor plate and the sidewalls of the processing chamber, as claimed by the Applicants.

Thus, the Applicants submit that independent claim 23 is patentable over *Komino*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn and the claim allowed.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Claims 23 and 24

Claim 23 stands rejected as being unpatentable over *Li* (U.S. Patent No. 6,448,536). In response, the Applicants have amended claim 23 to more clearly recite certain aspects of the invention.

Claim 23, as amended, recites elements not taught or suggested by *Li*. *Li* teaches an annular rectifying plate disposed between a shield frame and an inner surface of a process chamber. *Li* does not teach or suggest a restrictor plate in a laterally space-apart relation relative to the sidewalls of a processing chamber wherein a first predetermined gap is between the substrate support pedestal and the restrictor plate, and a second predetermined gap is between the restrictor plate and the sidewalls of the processing chamber, as claimed by the Applicants.

Thus, the Applicants submit that independent claim 23, and claim 24 depending therefrom, are patentable over *Li*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request these rejections be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Claims 1-3, 5-6, 9-11, 14-16, 18 and 25-28

Claims 1-3, 5-6, 9-11, 14-16, 18 and 25-28 stand rejected as being unpatentable over *Komino*, in view of *Yonenaga* (U.S. Patent No. 5,972,114). The Applicants respectfully disagree.

Independent claims 1, 10 and 23 recite elements not taught or suggested by the combination of *Komino* and *Yonenaga*. The teachings of *Komino* have been discussed above. *Yonenaga* teaches using a single annular support column 48 to support and connect a flow regulator plate 46 coupled to sidewalls of a process chamber 12, not a plurality of pins as asserted by the Examiner. Moreover, as the baffle plate of *Komino* integrally extends from the chamber wall and bridges to the substrate support, there is no motivation to separately support the baffle plate with an annular ring. Therefore, *Yonenaga* fails to teach, show, or suggest a modification to *Komino* that would yield at

least one restrictor plate supported within the semiconductor processing chamber by a plurality of support pins, as recited by claims 1, 10, 25 and 28.

Thus, the Applicants submit that claims 1, 10 and 25, and 28, and claims 2-3, 5-6, 9-11, 14-16, 18 and 26-27 depending therefrom, are patentable over *Komino* and *Yonenaga*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Claims 7, 8, 13, and 19-22

Claims 7, 8, 13, and 19-22, stand rejected as being unpatentable over *Komino* in view of *Yonenaga*. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

As discussed above, independent claims 1 and 10, from which claims 7, 8, 13, and 19-22 depend, are patentable over *Komino* and *Yonenaga*. Neither *Komino* nor *Yonenaga*, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests at least one restrictor plate supported within the semiconductor processing chamber by a plurality of support pins, as recited by claims 1 and 10.

Thus, the Applicants submit that claims 7, 8, 13, and 19-22, that depend from claims 1 and 10, are patentable over *Komino* in view of *Yonenaga*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the Applicants submit that all claims now pending are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issuance are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that any unresolved issues still exist, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Keith Taboada at (732) 530-9404 so that

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appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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Keith P. TABOADA
Attorney Reg. No. 45,150
(732) 530-9404

Patterson & Sheridan, LLP
595 Shrewsbury Avenue
Suite 100
Shrewsbury, NJ 07702